UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/C.2/50/L.44
29 November 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
SECOND COMMITTEE
Agenda item 95 (c)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT II)

Programme budget implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/50/L.27

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.27, the General Assembly would:

(a) Endorse the report of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) on its second substantive session (Nairobi, 24 April-5 May 1995), which contains, inter alia, decision II/1 on the financing of the Conference and its preparatory activities; decision II/3 on the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee on the organization of work of the Conference, including the holding of pre-conference consultations on 1 and 2 June 1996 (para. 1);

(b) Decide that the third session of the Preparatory Committee will be held at United Nations Headquarters from 26 February to 8 March 1996 (rather than from 5 to 16 February 1996) to finalize the provisional agenda for the Conference, and to formulate the draft global plan of action to be adopted by the Conference, including a statement of principles and commitments as an integrated part of the plan of action (para. 2);

(c) Request the Secretary-General to make the necessary provisions, within existing resources, so that the Preparatory Committee may, if it so decides, establish two working groups to meet in addition to plenary meetings for the duration of the third session (para. 3).

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2. It should be noted that the holding of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference in New York instead of in Nairobi is in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/109 in which the Assembly approved an exception to the provision of its resolution 40/243 that United Nations bodies should meet at their established headquarters.

3. While under the terms of operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.27, the General Assembly would decide that the Preparatory Committee will hold its third session from 26 February to 8 March 1996 (rather than from 5 to 16 February 1996), neither facilities nor services are available on the new dates proposed. Under these circumstances, it is proposed to maintain the original dates of 5 to 16 February 1996, as contained in the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1996-1997 as proposed by the Committee on Conferences.

4. With regard to the establishment of two working groups to meet in addition to the plenary meetings of the Preparatory Committee, it is envisaged that the Preparatory Committee will now require a total of six meetings per day (three in the morning and three in the afternoon) with interpretation in all six languages, or an addition of two meetings to the four meetings per day originally proposed. However, it is expected that there will be no increase in the documentation needs of the Preparatory Committee.

5. With regard to the two-day pre-conference consultations, it is anticipated that there will be two meetings per day with full interpretation and an estimated 10 pages of documentation to be issued in all six languages.

6. The conference-servicing requirements for the above meetings would entail additional resources estimated at $181,300 at full cost.

7. The extent to which the Organization's permanent capacity would need to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences and meetings for 1996-1997. Provision is, however, made under section 26E (Conference services) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 not only for meetings programmed at the time of budget preparations, but also for meetings authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences are consistent with the pattern of meetings in previous years (para. 26E.4).

8. Consequently, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/50/L.27, no additional appropriation would be required under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.